

## System e-mail addresses will allow DEQ to send emergency notices

**O**n September 11 of this year, DEQ e-mailed a message from U.S. Attorney General Ashcroft and Homeland Security Director Ridge to all 997 public water systems in Idaho that provided DEQ with their emergency contact e-mail addresses.

The e-mail was a test message to determine how the system might work in the future and to determine the number of "undeliverable" addresses in our database. The test went well delivering all but a small number of the e-mails.

DEQ compiled its e-mail list from a request mailed last December (2001) to all public water systems for emergency contact information. DEQ wants to have system contact information on file in case of an emergency or major disaster.

System response to the request was optional, but approximately 75% of the state's systems provided emergency contact information. Included in the request was a space for a system e-mail address "if available" (about 50% of those responding provided e-mail addresses). From these responses, DEQ compiled the system e-mail list used in the September 11 mailing.

If you are not on our emergency contact list for public water systems and would like to be, you may fill out the form below and mail it in; or you can go to our web site and fill out an "interactive" form and e-mail it back to DEQ according to the site instructions; or you can telephone your e-mail address to Joan Thomas (DEQ) at 208-373-0409.

Maintaining a current e-mail file is an ongoing task because of constant address corrections due either to changes in internet providers, or turnover in system contacts or owners. It will be the responsibility of public systems to notify DEQ of any emergency contact changes if they wish to continue to receive periodic information.

As the September 11 DEQ e-mail memo pointed out, when DEQ sends an emergency notice, system e-mail addresses will not be visible to anyone else on the mailing list. Furthermore, DEQ will not give your e-mail address to vendors or other agencies with the possible exception of the Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services (IBDS) or a specific federal agency, which may request public system addresses in order to contact water purveyors in case of an extreme state or national emergency.

You can mail the information form below to the Idaho Drinking Water Program, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, ID 83712 or

go to <http://www2.state.id.us/deq/water/water1.htm> to send the information electronically.

Public Water System Name: _____ PWS#: _____
Emergency Contact Name(s): _____
Emergency Daytime Telephone(s): _____ (may include pager or cell phone)
Emergency Night Time Telephone(s): _____ (may include pager or cell phone)
E-mail address (if available): _____

## Point-of-use considerations

**W**hen Congress renewed the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1996, it removed a long-standing provision that prohibited point-of-use (POU) treatment devices as a strategy for complying with the national primary drinking water regulations. Since then, there has been a lot of talk about point-of-use as a possible solution for small drinking water systems that may not be able to afford traditional centralized treatment. *This article briefly outlines some of the key issues that your system will need to thoroughly investigate before making a decision to pursue point-of-use treatment.*

**Definitions.** Point-of-use refers to treatment devices that are placed on a single water tap at each service connection. Point-of-entry, which is a related strategy that is often mentioned in the same sentence with POU, refers to treatment devices that are placed at the location where water from the public system enters a home or building. Because of waste disposal and economic considerations, point-of-entry is not usually viewed as a practical option for most small water systems. This article will discuss POU only.

**Restrictions on point-of-use devices.** To overcome concerns about safety and reliability, Congress placed some rather stringent restrictions on POU devices. All treatment units are to be owned and maintained by the public water system. They may not be used to treat for microbial contaminants. They must meet third-party certification standards, such as those of the National Sanitation Foundation. They must be equipped with an alarm that will alert the customer to the need for service.

## You can save money on your radiological samples

**Save Money.** Community water systems, you can save money if you take your required radiological samples before December 8, 2003. (The new Radiological Rule does not apply to nontransient noncommunity systems and transient water systems.)

The Radiological Rule will require community systems to take four quarters of initial samples beginning in 2003. However, systems can take one round of samples between June 2000 and December 8, 2003 and not have to take four rounds later. These results will determine your future monitoring schedules beginning in 2007.

**What do I need to do?** The new rule requires entry point monitoring, which means a sampling point after any treatment but before distribution. (The old rule required a representative distribution system sample.) To insure samples taken between June 2000 and December 8, 2003 qualify for "grandparenting," here's what you should do:

1. Take a gross alpha sample from each entry point to the distribution system (or EPIDS).
2. Take a radium-228 sample...yes, a radium-228 sample.
3. Next, you have a choice: You can either take a radium-226 sample or wait for the results of the gross alpha. If your gross alpha result is greater than 5pCi/L, you will have to take a radium-226. Your gross alpha can substitute for radium-226, if the results are below 5pCi/L.

**Caution:** Be aware that if you do substitute the gross alpha for radium-226, you will not be able to reduce your monitoring for that sampling point to once every 9 years. The most you will be able to reduce it to is once every 6 years and only if the gross alpha is a non-detect.

*DEQ highly recommends sampling for radium-226.*

4. Another choice: you can either take a uranium sample or wait for your gross alpha results. Gross alpha can substitute for uranium if the gross alpha is below 15pCi/L. However, keep in mind that the results from the gross alpha determine the future monitoring

frequency for uranium. Also, uranium results can be subtracted from gross alpha results to determine compliance for gross alpha.

**Why radium-228?** Both radium-226 and radium-228 are products of decay and although the maximum contaminant level for radium-226 and radium-228 is still a combined 5pCi/L, they come from different decay chains and occur independently. USEPA has also found that radium-228 has a higher risk than previously thought.

There are no laboratories in Idaho that perform radium-228 analysis. Below is a list of out-of-state laboratories that can do the analysis:

- Energy Labs Billings, MT  
307-235-0515
- General Engineering Labs Charleston, SC  
843-556-8171
- Paragon Labs (3 sample minimum) Fort Collins, CO  
970-490-1511
- Severn Trent Labs Richland, WA 509-375-3131
- Washington State Health Lab Shoreline, WA  
206-361-2822

*For more information see below.*

- USEPA's Radionuclides Guidance Web link:  
<http://epa.gov/safewater/rads/implement.html>
- USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 1-800-426-4791,
- Contact your regional DEQ office or regional health district:  
DEQ Coeur d'Alene, 208-769-1422  
Panhandle District Health, 208-265-6384  
DEQ Lewiston, 208-799-4370  
North Central District Health, 208-799-3100  
DEQ Boise, 208-373-0550  
Southwest District Health (Caldwell), 208-344-5403  
Central District Health (Boise), 208-327-7499  
DEQ Twin Falls 208-736-2190  
South Central District Health, 208-734-5900, ext. 217  
DEQ Pocatello, 208-236-6160  
Southeastern District Health, 208-233-9080, ext. 320  
DEQ Idaho Falls, 208-528-2650  
District Seven Health, 208-523-5382 ■

**Ready-to-use Public Notification templates available.** EPA provides ready-to-use public notification templates/forms to help water suppliers provide timely public notices to their customers. Templates are available in Word Perfect or Microsoft Word. A special section contains translated phrases in Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean. See the following EPA web site: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/pws/pn/templates.html>. You can also link to this EPA site from DEQ's web site at <http://www2.state.id.us/deq/water/water1.htm> **Note:** You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the Adobe PDF files shown on this EPA site. The site gives you instructions on how to download the Acrobat Reader at no charge.

## Notice to non-community non-transient drinking water systems

# DEQ offers free, one-time arsenic analysis

**Who?** All non-community non-transient water systems (NCNTWSs). A NCNTWS is a public water system which serves at least 25 people over 6 months of the year and is not regulated as a community water system.

**What?** Idaho DEQ is sponsoring a one-time *FREE* arsenic sampling event for non-community non-transient water systems between September 1, 2002 and December 31, 2002. On August 1, DEQ sent a letter of explanation and lab request form to all system contacts for NCNTWSs. However, if your system did not receive a letter or lab form, the information can be located on-line at the DEQ web site address listed at the end of this article.

**Why?** Non-community non-transient water systems have not had to monitor for arsenic in the past and therefore, not a lot of information exists on what the levels of arsenic are for this type of system.

EPA's new arsenic rule will require NCNTWSs to monitor and be in compliance with the maximum contaminant level of 10 parts per billion (ppb) in January 2006. This one-time sampling event will provide NCNTWSs with information about the levels of arsenic in their systems so that they can evaluate the treatment options if needed. The information will allow the state to more accurately assess statewide impacts of the new rule and assist effected systems with treatment options.

**When?** After September 1, 2002 but before December 31, 2002.

**How?** Contact the state lab at (208) 334-2235, Extension 226, to request sampling containers. Take one sample at each entry point to the distribution, which is a sampling point after any treatment but before entry to the distribution system. This is most likely the same sampling point where annual nitrate samples are taken. Most NCNTWSs have only one sampling point. Return the sample containers and the completed lab form to the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories in Boise. The form is available on-line if your system did not receive the information in the mail. Sample results will be mailed to you and to the Idaho DEQ. These samples are for evaluation only and will not be used to determine compliance with the new arsenic rule.

**Still have questions?** More information on the arsenic rule is available from DEQ on-line at:  
[http://www2.state.id.us/deq/water/water1.htm#drinking\\_water](http://www2.state.id.us/deq/water/water1.htm#drinking_water),  
or contact Jerri Henry/DEQ at (208) 373-0471. ■

DEQ's Idaho Drinking Water Newsletter is available online  
at <http://www2.state.id.us/deq/water/water1.htm>.

## TRAINING SCHEDULE

Class/Sponsor	Location	Date
<b>Wastewater Certification Review III &amp; IV ★</b>	Boise	Oct 9-10, 2002
<b>Very Small Water Systems Certification Review ★ 1 Day Comprehensive</b>	Fruitland	Oct 17, 2002
<b>Very Small Water Systems Certification Review ★ 1 Day Comprehensive</b>	Idaho Falls	Oct 22, 2002
<b>Rules &amp; Regulations ▲</b>	Twin Falls	Oct 22, 2002
<b>Source Water Protection Case Analysis ▲</b>	Twin Falls	Oct 22, 2002
<b>Decision Maker/Board Training ▲</b>	Twin Falls	Oct 23, 2002
<b>TMDL Compliance ▲</b>	Grangeville	Oct 22, 2002
<b>Sludge Treatment ▲</b>	Grangeville	Oct 22, 2002
<b>Pumps &amp; Motor O&amp;M ▲</b>	Moscow	Oct 23, 2002
<b>Pump Control Systems O&amp;M ▲</b>	Moscow	Oct 23, 2002
<b>Drinking Water Resource Management ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 28, 2002
<b>Rules &amp; Regulations ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 29, 2002
<b>Source Water Protection Case Analysis ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 29, 2002
<b>Decision Maker/Board Training ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 30, 2002
<b>Financial Asset Management ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 30, 2002
<b>Wastewater Certification Review I &amp; II ★</b>	Blackfoot	Oct 30-31, 2002
<b>Sanitary Survey Awareness ▲</b>	Lewiston	Oct 31, 2002
<b>Very Small Water Systems Certification Review ★ 1 Day Comprehensive</b>	Bonnors Ferry	Nov 5, 2002
<b>Activated Sludge ★</b>	Sandpoint	Nov 6-7, 2002
<b>Small Water System Operator Basics ▲</b>	Moscow	Nov 6-7, 2002
<b>SEIOS/SWIOS/IRWA ▲</b>	Twin Falls	Nov 7, 2002
<b>Pumps &amp; Motor O&amp;M ▲</b>	Lava Hot Springs	Nov 12, 2002
<b>Pump Control Systems O&amp;M ▲</b>	Lava Hot Springs	Nov 12, 2002
<b>Chlorination O&amp;M ▲</b>	Chubbuck	Nov 13, 2002
<b>Chlorination Systems ▲</b>	Chubbuck	Nov 13, 2002
<b>Small Water System Operator Basics ▲</b>	Pocatello	Nov 13-14, 2002
<b>Troubleshooting Water ★ New Class</b>	Soda Springs	Nov 19, 2002
<b>Wastewater Certification Review I &amp; II ★</b>	Pocatello	Nov 20-21, 2002
<b>Small Water System Operator Basics ▲</b>	Caldwell	Nov 20-21, 2002
<b>Collection I &amp; II ★ New Class</b>	Nampa	Nov 26, 2002
<b>Certification Exam</b>	Coeur d'Alene/ Lewiston/Pocatello	Dec 4, 2002
<b>Cross-Connections ★</b>	Lewiston	Dec 12, 2002
<b>Lagoon Operation &amp; Maintenance ★</b>	Coeur d'Alene	Dec 17-18, 2002
★ Brown Environmental, Inc. 1-800-543-4358 or for the Boise area, 208-465-5725. Fax: 208-465-8081 ▲ Idaho Rural Water Association, 1-800-962-3257 or for the Boise area, 208-343-7001. Fax: 208-343-1866.		

**If it sounds too good to be true . . .** In general, third party certified POU treatment devices are reliable, relatively inexpensive, and usually easy to install and operate. This leads to a situation in which the management challenges connected with a treatment strategy are actually more demanding than the technical issues. **If your water system is thinking about POU, be sure to keep the following points in mind:**

- *In community water systems, the POU device is located in individual homes. The normally passive role of the water system customer must be altered in order for POU to succeed. Permission must be granted for installation of the equipment and access to the home for regular maintenance and sampling.*
- *Only a single tap is treated. Customers must ensure that family members and guests do not routinely ingest water from untreated taps. Remember that POU treatment is aimed at chronic contaminants — accidental ingestion of small amounts of untreated water is not dangerous.*
- *All water system customers must agree to participate in the POU program.*
- *Rigorous maintenance is at the heart of a POU strategy. Water system personnel will need training. Maintenance of treatment devices by equipment vendors or other outside contractors may be a better option for small systems.*

- *Evaluation of waste disposal is a crucial part of the POU equation. Waste streams may contain concentrated contaminants. It is usually possible to send these flows to public sewer works or individual subsurface disposal systems, but this may vary with the quality of the raw water. Rarely, spent components or waste streams may actually be considered hazardous waste.*
- *DEQ will require the system to demonstrate that central treatment is not practical or affordable. The reason for this requirement is simply that central treatment is more desirable because it is under the control of skilled operators, it ensures that all water delivered to customers is potable, and it does not require access to private dwellings or special vigilance on the part of consumers.*
- *The water system may be liable for damage to individual homes in the event of leakage or other malfunctions. Insurance costs are an important factor.*

POU treatment may indeed be a viable solution for some small water systems, but the above points should make it clear that systems must approach POU with eyes wide open. A reputable water works engineering consultant should be retained to assist your system in evaluating a POU strategy. National guidance on this subject is under development by the USEPA and should be available in a few months. For further information, or to obtain a copy of DEQ's preliminary guidance on POU, contact your local DEQ office. ■

Costs associated with this publication are available from the Department of Environmental Quality. Cost per unit: \$0.21 Printed on recycled paper.



**DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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